



III SPECIALIZED MEETING OF MINISTERS, AND HIGH AUTHORITIES ON PREVENTION AND FIGHT AGAINST CORRUPTION

PANAMA DECLARATION

The Ministers and High Authorities of Prevention and Combat to Corruption of the member states of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), convened in Panama City, Republic of Panama, on October 16, 2015, considering that:

1. It is necessary to continue with the development of the commitments taken at I and II meeting of Ministers and High Authorities for Prevention and Fight against Corruption held on November 7 and 8 of 2013 in Santa Cruz de la Sierra- Bolivia and December 8 and 9 of 2014 in Quito- Ecuador, respectively.
2. CELAC is a mechanism of political concertation and regional integration that promotes cooperation, development, solidarity, dialogue on common issues, and brotherhood among the Latin American and Caribbean countries, strengthening unity on diversity.
3. The fight against corruption at all levels and in all its forms is a priority and that corruption constitutes a serious barrier to effective resource mobilization and allocation and diverts resources away from activities that are vital to the eradication of poverty and sustainable development.
4. Corruption is a global phenomenon that transcends borders, so it is necessary to strengthen cooperation and exchange of information based on the principle of reciprocity, good practices, lessons learned among Member States of the CELAC, in order to prevent impunity, investigate, prosecute, and return assets from corruption to the country from which they were stolen. In cooperation, exchange, restitution and other pertinent actions, the mechanisms, practices and internal legislation of the Member States will be respected.
5. The United Nations Convention against Corruption is an international legal framework of reference, which lays the basis for the development of subsequent national legislations.
6. Each State shall take appropriate measures, within available means and in accordance with their fundamental principles of its domestic law, to promote the active participation of individuals, as provided in article 13 of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, in the prevention and fight against corruption, and to sensitize public opinion regarding the existence, causes and gravity of corruption and the threat it represents.



7. The necessity of working in coordination with all organisms, forums and mechanisms focused on prevention and combat to corruption, in a way that synergies are fomented and allow the strengthening of common actions and prevent duplicity and waste of limited funds.
8. The promotion and strengthening of moral, ethical values, transparency and accountability are key elements of good governance in fulfillment of public functions.
9. The work of the Regional Anti-Corruption Academy for Central America and the Caribbean (ARAC) established in the Republic of Panama in conjunction with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), which has contributed to the capacity building in the public and private sectors on issues of prevention and fight against corruption.
10. It should be recognized the principle of the United Nations Convention against Corruption on sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States.
11. The good government, transparency and the robust system of justice are vital elements to prevent and fight corruption, to nourish and hold the economic development, the growth and prosperity of our societies and attain the sustainable development goals.
12. The good work done by several regional and global initiatives in the fight against corruption and in favor of governments more transparent, improve responsiveness to its citizens and facilitate accountability.

WE DECIDED TO SET THE FOLLOWING COMMITMENTS:

1. To support and deepen the agreements of the Special Declaration of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean on Transparency and Fight against Corruption, adopted at the Third Summit of CELAC held on the 28th and 29th of January 2015 in Belen, Costa Rica to promote a culture of transparency and citizen participation, to defend the value of ethics and openness of information, improve public services, manage public resources, promote innovation and create safer communities.
2. To continue the effective implementation of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, as well as other international and regional instruments for preventing and combating corruption in our countries, which they are signatories.



3. Encourage member states of the CELAC to establish and develop codes of ethics or programs within non-governmental actors, including the private sector.
4. Strengthening international cooperation and information exchange among member states of CELAC in relation to the agencies of prevention and fight against corruption, based on the principle of reciprocity and the principle of sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States.
5. Strengthen transparency, accountability, citizen participation and promotion for the use of new technologies in our governments.
6. Recognize the good performance of the Republic of Panama as President of the Conference of the States Parties to the UN Convention against Corruption, from November 25, 2013.
7. Present before the correspondent entities of the CELAC, this Declaration of the III Specialized Meeting of Minister and High Authorities of Prevention and Combat to Corruption of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States.
8. Consideration of the member states, in attention to the Belen agreements, optional remittal to the Pro Tempore Presidency of the CELAC of the good practices which estimate relevant in matter of prevention and combat to corruption.

Given in the City of Panama, Republic of Panama, at the sixteenth (16) days of October two thousand and fifteen (2015).